

Title:

**Group Ginger**

Transgression and the disjoined nature of architecture.

Authors:

Sarah Mills and Simon Baker

Theme:

**Practice**

Abstract:

Transgression is here to change the way buildings function, but if trans-programming, cross-programming, and developer led community consultations are our new norms what are the new articulations of the relationship between concept and experience, which are brought about by the disjunction between the two? For Tschumi transgression does not mean the methodical destruction of any code or rule that concerns space or architecture but it means overcoming unacceptable prevalence.<sup>i</sup>

This paper will examine three separate market regeneration projects for towns in the UK recently designed or realised by Group Ginger Architects, to question if the disjoined nature of architecture is its revolutionary potential and if uncertainty and the pleasure or violence of disjunction can be used to develop an Architecture that '[...] transcends its paradoxical nature by negating the form that society expects of it. In other words, it is not a matter of destruction or avant-garde subversion but of transgression.'<sup>ii</sup> The three case studies are Scarborough Market Hall and Vaults refurbishment and ongoing associated events, such as the immersive film/music event 'Shifting Sands'; Chesterfield outdoor market reconfigured for seasonally diverse uses and Doncaster Market, one of the largest markets in the UK, which includes 'performative' production.

Challenging the normative modes of architectural practice engenders collaboration and questions existing policies, guidelines, buildings and the current purpose of place. How can local events call the status of architecture into question, to change it and its role in society, and ultimately the society itself?



Figure 1. Scarborough Market Hall, Group Ginger Architects.

Notes

<sup>i</sup> 'Architecture and Transgression: An Interview with Bernard Tschumi' in *Architectural Design*, November/December 2013, pp. 32-37 (pp. 36-37).

<sup>ii</sup> Tschumi, 'Architecture and Transgression', *Architecture and Disjunction*, p78

### **Sarah Mills** AADipl SFHEA ARB

Sarah Mills is an architect and Head of Leeds School of Architecture at Leeds Beckett University. The Leeds School of Architecture delivers courses in Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Interior Architecture and Urban Design. Sarah studied architecture at the Architectural Association, London (AA Dipl), completed the Professional Practice in Architecture at The Bartlett, UCL and has taught architectural design in Architecture schools in London, Sheffield and Leeds. She is currently External Examiner for the Master of Architecture course at Huddersfield University (2019-2023), and Professional Examiner for the Professional Practice, RIBA Part 3 exams at The Bartlett (2019-20). She is a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a member of SCHOSA. Sarah was previously Postgraduate Course Director in Architecture and has co-led the MArch design research unit 'Cinematic Commons' since 2013, engaging in international collaborations, exhibitions and research workshops (Mumbai, Mexico City, Tokyo, Marseille, London), which are now being documented in the forthcoming website and book. She has worked at several architecture practices on projects in the UK, Germany and Qatar and collaborates with Group Ginger. Sarah's research reconsiders future models of interdisciplinary practice and the relationship between architecture and film in challenging urban conditions. She has published and curated exhibitions nationally and internationally.

### **Simon Baker** AA Dipl, RIBA, ARB

Simon Baker is an architect, educator and researcher; he currently teaches on the Master of Architecture Course at Sheffield University. He studied architecture at the Architectural Association, London (AA Dipl – Narrative Architecture Dipl 10), and completed the Professional Practice in Architecture at The Bartlett, UCL. Simon founded Group Ginger Architects in 2014 to offer an accessible design studio focused on place, identity and distinction; followed in 2018 by Ginger Works, a Leeds City Free Room including open meeting space for exhibitions and community events along with a small-scale fabrication open workshop. Simon has previously worked at director and board level positions at Terry Farrell and Partners and CZWG Architects. He was Design Council CABE, Building Environment Expert 2010 – 2020; Concourse, Architecture Centre for Leeds City Region; Chair and trustee 2009 – 2019 and RIBA Yorkshire Regional Chair 2013 – 2016. Simon's practice - based research re-appropriates underutilized spaces to challenge urban conditions and reactivate spaces via community engagement and recent projects have included the design for established annual light-based festival in York, a single night pop up cinema and an art installation sited on a disused viaduct, in Leeds.

### **Group Ginger Architects 2014-**

The practice's name derives from the political term, a ginger group. Ginger groups work to identify alternative ideas for the benefit of their host. As such Group Ginger works with clients to identify opportunities which amplify a project's potential and celebrate activity. The office operates beyond the architectural object and explores the potential of creating social spaces, focused on experience and narrative architecture. The practice challenges our role as architects to develop on-going client relationships aligned to place-making, public use and participatory involvement. Through this continuous activity they are intent on delivering pragmatic solutions of building adaptation/re-appropriation that challenges and delivers an architecture fit for everyday life that is adaptable flexible and responsive. Group Ginger has received recognition at a regional and national scale through the RIBA project awards, BD architects of the year awards and RICS project awards.

Recent projects include: Hartlepool - Northern School of Art; Lichfield Cathedral City - Mixed-use regeneration; Doncaster Market- Consolidation of Market Assets and activity; Royal Armouries Museum - Asset Review & Masterplan strategy; Leeds College of Music & St. Peters Square; Top hill

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Low, Nature Reserve and education centre; Scarborough Market; The Tetley, Art Gallery and Education Facility;  
Endeavour Wharf – Centre for renewable technologies.

### **Awards**

- 2020, LABC Building Excellence Awards; Best Change of use of an existing building, The BIS, Hartlepool  
RICS Social Impact Awards; North East Region, Heritage category, The BIS, Hartlepool  
RIBA Awards; RIBA North East region, The BIS, Hartlepool  
BD architects of the year awards; Client of the Year, The BIS, Hartlepool -Shortlisted  
AJ Retrofit; Listed Building under £10 million, The BIS, Hartlepool - Shortlisted
- 2019 RICS Awards 2019; Building conservation, Scarborough Market, Highly commended  
RICS Awards 2019; Tourism & Leisure, The Hide, Highly commended
- 2018 RIBA Awards; RIBA Yorkshire region, LCOM, Shortlisted  
RIBA Awards; RIBA Yorkshire region, Scarborough Market  
RIBA Awards; RIBA Yorkshire region, The Hide  
RIBA Awards; Client of the Year, The Hide  
BD architect of the year awards; Small project architect of the year  
BD architects of the year awards; Young architect of the year, shortlisted  
BUILD Architecture Awards; Most Client Focused Architects, Scarborough Market  
BUILD Architecture Awards ; Best UK Rooftop Extension & Refurbishment Project, LCOM
- 2014 RICS Pro-Yorkshire Award Building Conservation, Regeneration, The Tetley, Shortlisted  
AJ retro Fit Awards; Cultural building, The Tetley, Shortlisted